

Courier

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Fire Prevention Week: “Test Your Smoke Alarm”

Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 3 - 9. Fire-fighters and paramedics from all 35 fire and rescue stations will hold open house on Saturday, Oct. 9, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. with tips and demonstrations on how to test your smoke alarm and how to be prepared in the event of fire. The Clifton Fire and Rescue Station #16 will hold their open house on Sunday, Oct. 10, from



This young man has big boots to fill as he learns about fire safety.

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. during Clifton Day.

“Test Your Smoke Alarm” is the theme this year. Although smoke alarms are a fire safety success, 70 percent of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or alarms that aren’t working. After all, if a smoke alarm is going to save our lives, we must have one installed and, even more important, working.

See Prevention, page 2

Charitable campaign begins

Fairfax County will kick-off the 2004 Combined Charitable Campaign with an exposition of non-profit organizations that benefit from contributions. The exposition will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first floor of the Government Center, Thursday, Oct. 7. Door prizes will be given, so plan to attend and find out how your contributions can make a difference.

See Campaign, page 3

Printed *Courier* to resume

On Sept. 24, the Senior Management Team recommended that *Courier* again be provided in a print format. County Executive **Tony Griffin** agreed with the recommendation and directed that the county employee newsletter resume being provided in printed form.

Griffin noted that, while the electronic format will remain as a fast and efficient

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Prevention, from page 1

In addition to home smoke alarm information, stations will provide safety tips regarding candle fires, carbon monoxide, emergency preparedness and a variety of related topics. Tours of the stations and apparatus will be conducted, along with the chance to ask firefighters and paramedics questions regarding the safety of you and your family.

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire in 1871 that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000

homeless, destroyed

over 17,400

structures

and

burned

more

than

2,000

acres. The

fire began

Oct. 8 of

that year

and continued

until the next day

when it did

most of its

damage. There

are several

different theories

for how the fire

began. One myth is the O'Leary's "Moo" myth where her cow kicked over a lantern; another myth is that a meteorite fell to the

earth. You can find more information on these and other myths, as well as more information on fire prevention, on the Internet at www.nfpa.org/FPW/About_Fire_Prevention_Week/about_fire_preventionweek.asp.

Although Fire Prevention Week commemorates the Great Chicago Fire, there also was another disastrous fire that year that caused even more damage – the Peshtigo Fire in Northeast Wisconsin. That fire did its worst damage in one hour and destroyed the entire town of Peshtigo. Altogether, the fire destroyed 16 towns, killed 1,152 people and damaged 1.2 million acres.

Since those dreadful fires, there have been eight decades of focusing on ways to prevent fires. President Woodrow Wilson designated the first National Fire Prevention Day in 1920; and in 1922, Fire Prevention Week was determined to be observed every year and would fall within the week of Oct. 8. Still, with all our alarms and information on fire prevention, the main source of prevention is the individual. Only we can guard against unnecessary fires.

Plan to visit your local fire station this year and learn how some very dedicated people are guarding your safety and what you can do to make their jobs more effective. And the kids will love the visit!

For more information, contact your local station or the Fire & Rescue Public Information and Life Safety Education Section at 703-246-3801, TTY 703-385-4419. ■

Courier, from page 1

way to read *Courier*, many county employees prefer receiving the *Courier* in print form, allowing the newsletter to be read when convenient and shared with others at home. Because of the nature of their jobs, other employees had limited access to computers from which to read the newsletter. "*Courier* has been an important source of information for county employees," said Griffin. "I expect it will remain an important communications channel as we all become more closely involved in our work."

The printed version of *Courier* will begin

with the Oct. 15 issue, using its new 8.5 X 11 "booklet" format now seen on the Infoweb. The electronic version, in color, will remain available on the county Infoweb at <http://infoweb/courier>.

Courier will continue its tradition of more than 18 years of providing information to county employees. This will include articles on employees, agency and organization profiles, county projects and benefit information. Story ideas and employees accomplishments are welcome and can be provided to *Courier* at courier@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-3197, TTY 703-324-2935. ■

Feedback
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Feedback

courier@fairfaxcounty.gov

Campaign, from page 1

South County employees will have a kick-off event at the South County Center on Friday, Oct. 8, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. There will be non-profit representatives to answer questions and provide background information on their organizations, a luncheon sponsored by Tubby's Chili Parlor and door prizes.

The Combined Charitable Campaign is the county's major effort for employees to make financial commitments to the area's needy causes. "Those visiting the expo will see what a difference one dollar a week can do," said **Margaret Savage**, DHR personnel analyst and county campaign coordinator. "Our goal is for every employee to contribute one dollar a week to the campaign. That's only \$52 a year which will provide lunch for the homeless, respite care for a cancer patient, flu shots for uninsured senior citizens, one week of job counseling for new comers and a safe place for abandoned animals."

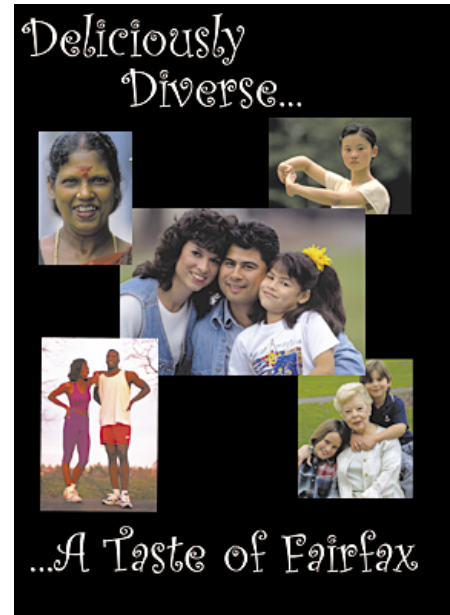
According to Savage, the Combined Charitable Campaign contributions are channeled through the agencies supported by the area's United Way. For almost 30 years, the United Way, through more than 900 non-profit partners, has provided health and human service programs to our communities. "The

generous support of our county employees helps many organizations continue their good work," said Savage.

One of the changes this year affects the amount a donor may designate to a specific non-profit. There must be a minimum of \$25 pledged to a specific organization in order to maintain the efficiency in pledge processing.

Find out more about the Combined Charitable Campaign by visiting the Infoweb at <http://infoweb/hr/relate/forms/2004Campaign.pdf> or calling Margaret Savage at 703-324-3357, TTY 703-222-7314. You can make your contributions to this important effort through your designated department key person.

Please be generous this year. For only a dollar a week – that's one large soda each week – you may change someone's life for the better. That's a pretty good return on your investment! ■



Did you know that in Fairfax County:

- * About 43,400 residents live in poverty.
- * Nearly 2,000 people are homeless.
- * 10 percent of families run out of money for rent, utilities, food and medicine at least twice a year.
- * The county's Child Care Assistance and Referral Program serves more than 9,200 children in working families annually.
- * Almost 20 percent of our public school children receive free or reduced-price lunches.
- * Social workers respond to more than 31,000 reports of child abuse or neglect each year.

Letter to county employees

The 2004 Fairfax County Combined Charitable Campaign 2004 is underway through October. The combined campaign is a joint effort of the county government and Fairfax County Public Schools, and I hope you will join me in this year's campaign that addresses the needs of so many Fairfax County residents.

I am involved because I believe this is the best way to mobilize resources to help Fairfax County's most vulnerable citizens and make our region a better place for all of us to live and work. It provides a foundation for our economic and business development, breathes life into our prevention and intervention services, and enhances our quality of life on a daily

basis. Our county government works very hard to maintain a comprehensive program of human services programs, but governments cannot fund every human service need.

I also am involved because I believe the United Way, which distributes funds to dozens of local agencies that promote self-sufficiency for the disabled and the elderly and supports families with young children, has made tremendous strides in management, financial efficiency and oversight in the last two years.

*Katherine K. "Kate" Hanley
Former Chairman,
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors*

Bond Referendum

Fairfax County voters will be asked to vote "yes" or "no" on four individual bond questions in the Nov. 2 general election. In the last issue of *Courier*, the library and human services bond issues were presented. This second article will explain the park and transportation questions.

Parks

The park bond question asks voters to allow the county to borrow \$75 million to buy land for new parks and athletic fields, and renovate older parks and facilities.

The Fairfax County Park Authority has proposed \$12.76 million in bond funds to acquire new parkland and \$52.24 million to develop new facilities as well as improve and renovate existing facilities. Some actions included in the plan are:

- ♦ acquiring new fields, renovating existing fields, and adding lighting to existing fields;
- ♦ phasing development of several new and existing community parks;
- ♦ improving existing trails and bridges and creating new ones;
- ♦ preserving and protecting watershed areas, replacing exhibits at nature centers, supporting facilities at Sully Woodlands, and creating a visitor center at Ellmore Farm in Frying Pan Park;
- ♦ repairing and improving roads and parking lots.

For information about the parks bonds, contact the Fairfax County Park Authority Public Information Office, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 927, Fairfax, Va., 22035, at 703-324-8662, TTY 711, or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks.

The \$10 million requested for the regional park authority will help restore, renovate and modernize existing park facilities, many of which were developed or constructed more than 25 years ago. Additional elements of the proposed CIP include expansion of rowing opportunities, improvements to family aquatic centers, historic property preservation and land acquisition. For more information about the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, call 703-359-4603, TTY 711, send e-mail to info@nvrpa.org, or visit www.nvrpa.org. ■

Transportation

The transportation bond will provide \$165 million to fund transportation and pedestrian initiatives including: \$110 million to fund the county's share of the Washington Metropolitan Transportation Authority capital program, \$5 million to fund pedestrian improvements and \$50 million to support the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' Four-Year Transportation Plan.

Pedestrian enhancement projects throughout the county include the construction of missing sidewalk and trail links connecting neighborhoods to transit facilities and growth centers, and safety improvements, including improved crosswalks, pavement markings and signalization and signage, as well as enhancements to accessibility.

The Four-Year Transportation Plan will supplement programmed transportation projects partially funded through both federal and state programs. These additional funds, when matched with \$50 million in anticipated federal funds, will expedite several transportation projects currently only partially funded and will include both major and minor highway improvements, as well as transit and pedestrian enhancements. These improvements are consistent with the county's long-range transportation plan and are intended to result in reduced congestion and delay while improving safety and air quality.

For more information about the transportation bonds, contact the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 1034, Fairfax, Va., 22035, at 703-324-1100, TTY 711, or send e-mail to charlie.strunk@fairfaxcounty.gov. ■

For more information about the 2004 Bond Referendum, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/opa/bond.

Open enrollment begins Oct. 15 for 2005 benefits

Open enrollment for 2005 pre-tax benefits will be Oct. 15 - Nov. 15 this year. During this time, employees may enroll, change or drop coverage for health, dental or life insurance. Employees who want to participate in the flexible spending accounts (medical spending or dependent care) must make their 2005 elections during open enrollment.

New this year – all enrollments will be done online. Every benefit eligible employee will receive an open enrollment packet at home explaining the new online process and benefit changes. An open enrollment *Courier* Supplement will be included in the packet. Be sure to check out the dates of the benefit information meetings that have been scheduled in various county locations and the Meet the Plan days that are scheduled for the Government Center.

New Dental Plan for 2005

The Board of Supervisors has approved a contract award to Delta Dental for the County's dental insurance, effective Jan. 1, 2005. The new dental plan is a PPO plan and includes an employer contribution of 50 percent of the premiums. Employees will receive information on the dental plan in their open enrollment packets. A list of dates

for open enrollment meetings will be published in the *Courier* Supplement and is included in the packets. The dates for open enrollment meetings are also on the Infoweb at <http://infoweb/HR/Benefits>.

Group Term Life Insurance Options Increase

The new group term life insurance contract for 2005 was awarded to Minnesota Mutual, the County's current carrier. Employees will see several enhancements including lower rates for optional coverage, increased dependent coverage with no premium change and additional options for employee paid optional coverage. Currently, employees can elect one or two times their annual salary for optional group term life coverage. For the 2005 plan year, employees can apply for 3x or 4x salary for a maximum total of 5x salary (includes employer provided basic of 1x salary). Employees who currently have 2x salary optional coverage are guaranteed 1x additional coverage if the total optional coverage does not exceed \$325,000. Optional coverage amounts that exceed \$325,000 require medical evidence and are subject to plan approval. More information on group term life will be provided in the *Courier* Supplement. ■

Need Customer Service?

For enrollment or eligibility, call Human Resources at 703-324-4917, TTY 703-22-7314, or e-mail [HRBenefits](mailto:HRBenefits@infoweb) or [HRExpress](mailto:HRExpress@infoweb) on the Infoweb.

For questions on benefit programs call:

FairChoice BlueChoice
800-296-0724
Blue Preferred PPO
800-296-0724
or Betsi Fuhrman,
703-324-3474
Kaiser Permanente
301-468-6000
Cigna Health
800-244-6224
Delta Dental
800-237-6060
Ceridian (Flex Plans)
877-799-8820
Group Term Life Ins.
800-843-8358

Open Enrollment Quick Notes

General Information

- ✓ Open enrollment starts Oct. 15 and ends Nov. 15.
- ✓ Open enrollment changes take effect Jan. 1, 2005.
- ✓ Open enrollment packets will be mailed to every benefit eligible employee at home.
- ✓ The Benefit Summary Handbook will be on the Infoweb this year. Printed copies will not be distributed. Employees can download and print a copy or request a hard copy by e-mailing HRBenefits or calling 703-324-4917, TTY 703-222-7314.

Dental Plans

- ✓ Information on the new Delta Dental PPO plan will be included in the open enrollment packet.
- ✓ There will be a 50 percent employer contribution for dental premiums starting Jan. 2005.
- ✓ Employees must enroll for 2005 dental coverage. Current contracts will end Dec. 31, 2004.
- ✓ The CIGNA DHMO will no longer include a dental DHMO.
- ✓ Discount dental services will still be available in Kaiser and FairChoice.

Flex Plans

- ✓ You must make a new election to participate in 2005.
- ✓ Enrollment will be online this year through the Benelogic Web site at www.fairfaxcountybenefits.benelogic.com.
- ✓ Be sure to print a confirmation statement after enrolling online.
- ✓ Ceridian will send a confirmation of your 2005 election amount in December.
- ✓ Spend 2004 flex dollars prior to Dec. 31, 2004.

<http://infoweb/HR/benefits>

Online Pay Advice Has Arrived

The Department of Human Resources' new Online Pay Advice (biweekly statement of earnings and leave) is now available through TIME to employees!

Beginning today, Oct. 1, and continuing until Dec. 31, employees can choose to be "in or out" of the new system as often as they like during a county-wide trial period. After the initial trial period has ended, only employees who are enrolled in the program may continue to view their pay advice online. Employees may enroll at any time during the year.

Advantages of this exciting new pay statement program include:

- ♦ easy access to your pay advice online through TIME for the current and prior pay periods – a total of 36 pay periods will be maintained online.
- ♦ viewing your pay advice online as early as the Tuesday before pay day.

- ♦ reducing paper waste and postage costs.

To check out the Online Pay Advice or enroll in the program today, simply follow these steps:

1. Sign on to the Employee Time Menu in TIME.
2. Select transaction 040 (Pay Advice) from the menu.
3. Read the Statement of Understanding found on the enrollment screen.
4. When you are ready to enroll, type a 'Y' in the designated field on the enrollment screen and press enter to update your selection.

For more detailed instructions and information, please visit the Department of Human Resources on the Infoweb at <http://infoweb/hr>. Questions regarding the Online Pay Advice program should be directed to the Payroll Division at 703-324-3412, TTY 703-222-7314. ■

You can find answers to your questions on the Infoweb at <http://infoweb>.

Planning for the general election

Election Officer Training

Fairfax County needs approximately 3,000 citizens to serve as election officers for each general election, according to **Margaret Luca**, secretary of the Fairfax County Electoral Board. County employees are encouraged to volunteer as pollworkers. A program successfully tested last year again permits employees receive a day of administrative leave as well as the pay for working at a polling place. "I encourage county employees to join us at the polls," said Luca, who noted that those wanting to work at the polls must have their supervisor's permission. For more information visit <http://infoweb/hr/pollworker.htm>.

Those working as election officers must attend a one-time training class. To qualify for an election officer, you must be a registered voter in the commonwealth of Virginia, cannot be an elected official or an employee of an elected official. For more

information on training classes and locations, qualifications, responsibilities and how to apply, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/gov/eb/working.htm.

Absentee Voting

Registered voters who are unable to go to the polls because of illness, disability or absence from Fairfax County may vote by absentee ballot. Eligible citizens may vote in-person prior to Election Day, or apply to have an absentee ballot mailed to them. All ballots must be in to the Electoral Board office by 7 p.m. on Election Day. Absentee applications are now being accepted. The last day to request an absentee ballot by mail is Thursday, Oct. 28, at 6 p.m. You must mail your Absentee Ballot Application to the General Registrar, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 323, Fairfax, VA 22035-0081 or fax it to 703-324-3725. The application, and more voting information, is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb. ■

Voting is a privilege enjoyed and protected in this country. Make sure you vote this year.

Briefs

Computer Security Incident

Computer users should report any confirmed or suspected security incident such as passwords being cracked or stolen, unauthorized computing device (personal PDAs, laptops, tablet PCs, etc.) being connected to the county's computer network and stolen or misused county equipment. Remember to report incidents using the incident reporting form available at <http://infoweb/DIT> or by contacting the Technical Support Center at 703-222-3535, TTY 711.

Day Labor Survey Report

The Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services' report, "Day Labor Survey: An Account of Day Laborers in Fairfax County" is now available on the county's Web site.

The report is a point-in-time study that contains information about the county's day labor population, including demographic and employment information.

The report can be accessed electronically on the county's Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/dsm.

Huntington Community Center Holds Oktoberfest

You will find hot dogs, hamburgers, cotton candy, carnival games and live entertainment at the Huntington Community Center's Oktoberfest on Saturday, Oct. 9, from noon to 4 p.m. on the grounds of the Huntington Community Center, 5751 Liberty Dr., Alexandria. It's a family affair and the public is invited. For more information, call 703-960-1917, TTY 703-222-9693.

County Electronics Recycling Event a Huge Success

On Sept. 11, the Division of Solid Waste Collection and Recycling, in conjunction with CompUSA and Service Source, hosted a computer recycling event at the Fair Lakes Shopping Center. A record 72,760 pounds of computers were collected. According to an onsite survey about how participants heard about the event, 18 percent (the second highest number) cited NewsLink.

The computers are disassembled by workers at Service Source – a non-profit that provides employment for people with disabilities. Computer

recycling helps the environment because computer monitors contain 7 pounds of lead. The next computer recycling event is Nov. 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Herndon High School. In addition to computers, bicycles, cell phones and eye glasses will be collected. For more information, contact **Marion Plummer** in DSWCR at 703-324-5451, TTY 711.

Fall for Fairfax

The 12th annual Fall for Fairfax, scheduled for tomorrow, Oct. 2, on The Ellipse at the Fairfax County Government Center, offers a full day of family-friendly activities and entertainment. Admission and entertainment are FREE!

Fall for Fairfax has interactive exhibits focusing on health, fitness, safety, educational and environmental activities.

New to Fall for Fairfax is the Cox Communications Cultural Stage featuring performances by popular storyteller Baba Jamal Koran, the Indian dance troupe Cham Cham Payal Bajey, and El Tayrona Colombian Folklore Music and Dance. The CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Stage features vocal acts and comedy from Jim Moyer's Circus Club, the a cappella talents of Almost Recess, Beowulf T. Wonderbunny Traveling Show of Mystery, the always captivating Reptile World and Kidsinger Jim.

For more information, visit www.celebratefairfax.com. The festival is presented by Inova Health System, Times Community Newspapers, Cox Communications, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, WUSA 9 News, Coca Cola, Booz Allen Hamilton, Ted Britt Ford, SunRocket, WMAL 630AM, Home Depot, Washington Gas, AOL for Broadband, and KMANet. ■

Fairfax County Executive **Tony Griffin** recently was presented with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Visionary Leadership Award at a ceremony at The George Washington University. Griffin was selected by the students in the IRE's public policy management program in recognition of his leadership in urban and regional governance, citing "...his commitment to diversity, regionalism and fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation for all people."

Also, graduating from the MWCOC's Institute for Regional Excellence were six Fairfax County employees: **Kristen Cigler** (DCRS), **Arthur Culbertson** (DPWES), **Holly Franz** (DCRS), **Clare Kiley** (McLean CC), **Gail Kohn** (DCRS) and **Lorraine Peck** (JDRDC).

The IRE was established in 2001 to assist local jurisdictions in providing regional executive development opportunities to managers and senior staff. Since the IRE program began, 27 county employees have participated in the program.

On the street...

What did you do this summer? *Courier* posed this question to members of the Department of Finance who recently were holding a bake sale to raise money for special needs. (The *Courier* editor had a "special need" which was satisfied by a delicious brownie!)



Shakeel Usuf, division chief: *I had a two-week holiday in the paradise of Fiji. It's one of the most beautiful*

places on Earth, and not because I have family and friends there. The ocean, beaches and tropical hills are well worth the 17-hour air flight.

Renee Jamison, administrative assistant:

We had our first family reunion. And it was terrific! Our family is from this area and we held the reunion in Culpeper. We invited 50 family members and more than 200 showed up. It was unbelievable! We can't wait until next year!



Indu Dhingra, administrative assistant:

This was our summer to celebrate. One of our daughters graduated with a degree in Information Technology from college and our other daughter finished dental school. They will both work in the area so we'll continue to enjoy their presence. We also are selling our home and buying a new one which I've found really takes time.



summer weather biking and jogging. I must admit I took my vacation in February when I visited my homeland, Indonesia. That was nice.

Wahjoe Octomo, business analyst: *I've only been working for Fairfax County for a year, so I spent most of the summer working. I was able to enjoy our*



Harish Patel, risk management: *We drove to Dayton, Ohio, to visit family members. Joining us was*

my sister and her family from India whom I hadn't seen in more than 25 years. My, how we all have changed. I was so happy. It was a very special summer for me.

Annette Decker, administrative assistant: *My*

sister and I enjoyed a vacation together in Myrtle Beach. It was great! But my big summer excitement was moving into a full-time, merit position in DOF. The people and the work are great.



Martha Pennino

In remembrance of Martha Pennino

Martha Pennino, long-time county advocate and former county supervisor, passed away Friday, Sept. 17, at age 86. Her death was a result of Parkinson's disease. Pennino has served as vice chairman of the Board of Supervisors for 17 years, and had held the position for 16 years consecutively.

Courier

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